

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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S E C R E T ANKARA 6059

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: MARR, TU
SUBJECT: U S WITHDRAWAL FROM KARAMURSEL

REF: STATE 180675 (DTG 021420Z AUG 77)

1. WE BELIEVE THAT IT WILL BE POSSIBLE FOR US TO APPROACH GOT WITH REGARD TO KARAMURSEL PHASEOUT PER REFTEL. STAFF LEVEL OFFICIALS IN FOREIGN MINISTRY, TURKISH GENERAL STAFF (TGS) AND MILITARY SIGINT SERVICE (GES) HAVE GENERALLY KNOWN OF OUR INTENTION TO CLOSE KARAMURSEL SINCE US-TURKISH DEFENSE COOPERATION AGREEMENT (DCA) NEGOTIATIONS IN LATE 1975EARLY 1976. EMBASSY AND JUSMMAT HAVE SINCE THAT TIME RECEIVED LOW-KEY QUERIES AS TO US INTENTIONS RE KARAMURSEL'S FUTURE. HOWEVER, TOP GOT DECISION-MAKERS, INCLUDING PRIME MINISTER DEMIREL AND TGS CHIEF GENERAL SANCAR, MAY NOT BE AWARE OF US INTENTIONS, AND OUR INFORMING GOT OF DEFINITE USG DECISION TO PHASE OUT KARAMURSEL MAY COME AS A SURPRISE TO THEM.

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2. REGARDING TIMING, WE CAN PROCEED WITH NOTIFICATION TO GOT AT ANY TIME, BUT IT IS NOT LIKELY THAT DETAILED DISCUSSIONS ON KARAMURSEL'S CLOSURE CAN BE INITIATED UNTIL EARLY SEPTEMBER DUE TO IMPENDING ANNUAL TURKISH MILITARY COMMAND CHANGES.

3. ALSO, IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN TIMING IS USG DECISION-MAKING

WITH RESPECT TO ACTION ON THE DCA. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT FORWARD MOVEMENT ON THE DCA IN CONJUNCTION WITH OUR MOVE TO CLOSE KARAMURSEL MAY AMELIORATE SOME OF THE POSSIBLE ADVERSE INTERPRETATIONS THAT MAY BE PLACED ON OUR ACTION BY THE TURKS. ADDITIONALLY, THERE IS A POSSIBILITY THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO DEMIREL GOVERNMENT TO HAVE IT APPEAR THAT KARAMURSEL IS BEING CLOSED AT THE GOT'S BEHEST, NOT OURS. IF USG ACTION ON THE DCA IS FURTHER DELAYED, PERHAPS EVEN UNTIL NEXT YEAR, THE GOT MAY FIND ITSELF SUBJECTED TO PUBLIC PRESSURE TO "DO SOMETHING" ABOUT THE DEFERRAL OF ACTION ON THE DCA, AND IT MAY WISH TO BE ABLE TO POINT TO THE CLOSURE OF KARAMURSEL AS HAVING FULFILLED THIS REQUIREMENT.

4. ON EQUIPMENT REMOVAL, SEVERAL MONTHS AGO USAF SECURITY SERVICE INITIATED MOVEMENT OF SURPLUS SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT OUT OF KARAMURSEL. UNDER THE TERMS OF "PROVISIONAL STATUS" CLEARANCE FOR SUCH SHIPMENTS MUST BE OBTAINED FROM TGS. AFTER APPROVING SEVERAL SHIPMENTS, TGS INFORMED JUSMMAT THAT NO ADDITIONAL SHIPMENTS FROM KARAMURSEL WOULD BE APPROVED. COUPLED WITH STAFF LEVEL INDICATIONS OF TURKISH INTEREST IN OBTAINING CERTAIN EQUIPMENT PRESENTLY AT KARMURSEL, THIS REFUSAL TO CLEAR OUTBOUND SHIPMENTS INDICATES THAT WE MAY ENCOUNTER DIFFICULTY IN REMOVING ITEMS, INCLUDING SENSITIVE AND SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT. EXPERIENCE WITH PREVIOUS BASE CLOSINGS (EG, TRABZON, SAMSUN) INDICATES THAT GOT MAY INITIALLY INSIST ON TAKING OVER INSTALLATION WIT SIGINT
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EQUIPMENT IN PLACE. BOTH 1969 AND 1976 DCAS PROVIDE THAT NON-REMOVABLE PROPERTY INCORPORATED INTO THE SOIL, INCLUDING ANTENNAS, CAN BECOME GOT PROPERTY UPON PAYMENT OF RESIDUAL VALUE TO USG AND THAT GOT HAS PRIORITY IN ACQUIRING EQUIPMENT EXCESS TO USG NEEDS. GOT MAY LAY CLAIM TO SIGNIFICANT AMOUNTS OF SIGINT AND OTHER EQUIPMENT, THUS REQUIRING EXTENDED AND DETAILED NEGOTIATIONS BEFORE REMOVAL CAN BE EFFECTED.

5. IN CONNECTION WIT EQUIPMENT SALE/TURNOVER, WE WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S ASSESSMENT AS TO POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS OF CONGRESSIONALLY-MANDATED ARMS TRANSFER RESTRICTIONS ON KARAMURSEL CLOSING. SPECIFICALLY, WOULD \$175 MILLION FY 78 CEILING APPLY TO TRANSFER TO GOT OF DEFENSE MATERIEL, INCLUDING SIGINT, COMMUNICATIONS AND OTHER EQUIPMENT, PURSUANT TO OUR WITHDRAWAL FROM KARAMURSEL? IF SUCH TRANSFERS WOULD BE WITHIN THE FMS CEILING, WE SEE LITTLE POSSIBILITY OF SECURING GOT APPROVAL TO WITHDRAW US MATERIEL FROM KARAMURSEL UNTIL CEILING IS LIFTED.

6. FINALLY, THERE IS A STRONG POSSIBILITY THAT THE MARCH 31, 1978, DEADLINE FOR A COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL FROM KARAMURSEL

CANNOT BE FULLY MET. THE ESTIMATE OF PEOPLE HERE WHO KNOW
THE KARAMURSEL SITUATION BEST SAY THAT NINE TO TWELVE
MONTHS WILL BE REQUIRED, AFTER THE ACTUAL CLOSURE DECISION
IS MADE, TO REALIGN THE COMMUNICATION NET AND LOGISTICS
SUPPORT RESPONSIBILITIES REQUIRED FOR OTHER US ACTIVITIES
IN NORTHWESTERN TURKEY WHICH ARE CURRENTLY BEING PROVIDED
BY KARAMURSEL.
SPIERS

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